



P-20 Council Meeting Re: Grade-span configuration
June 8, 2012

Hello. My name is Amee Adkins. I serve as President of the Illinois Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the state professional organization representing teacher preparation. Thank you for this opportunity to provide commentary.

We support the following grade-span configuration:

- Early Childhood: Pre-K (not birth) through grade 3, with the Early Childhood Special Education Letter of Approval
- Elementary: Kindergarten through grade 5
- Middle Level: grade 6-grade 8

We believe the current Elementary Ed configuration spanning Kindergarten through grade 9 is too expansive, both in terms of child/adolescent developmental considerations and content knowledge, to be appropriately addressed in the traditional teacher education program. In response to this view, one option, not one we would support, would be to substantially increase the scope of teacher prep programs, thus adding additional semesters to the program of study. Another, which we do support, is to tighten scope of responsibility for different endorsements, thereby ensuring, in a reasonable amount of time, a well-prepared and highly qualified teacher for the students at each level.

Respectfully disagreeing with many of the early childhood education advocates, in consideration of the difference between an endorsement of “birth to grade X” and “pre-K to grade X,” we do not see the birth to age 3 as within the purview of licensure concerns for the Illinois State Board of Education, so the former is not appropriate to include. Should the recommendation for a pre-K-2 or -3 reach approval, programs retain the discretion to choose to address the birth-age 3 considerations in their curriculum.